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My Ego

BY

THE REV. CHARLES JOSIAH ADAMS, D. D.

AUTHOR OF

Where Is My Dog; or, Is Man Alone Immortal? The Racing Parson; or, How Baldy Won the County Seat, Robert G. Ingersoll, et al., and the Clerical Attire, Etc., Reprieve and Other Poems, Hope Undeferred, Awakenings, In Athens, This and That and That and This, Etc., Etc.

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NEW YORK:

J. S. OGILVIE PUBLISHING COMPANY

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MAR -9 1920

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PREFACE

An acquaintance said to me: "Your *This and That and That and This* is a great credit to you!—I waited. —He added: "But you left something out!"—"What?" I asked.—"The relations between the sexes!" he answered.—I told him that that came of my intending to sing again on the general theme of Correlation, and told a story. Some one quoted to Oliver Wendell Holmes, from a current writer, something to the effect, that man is twice in the hands of woman—in his infancy and in his old age. "Huh!" Holmes commented, "I said that half a century ago!"—But the statement does not go far enough. In the cradle, and between it and the grave, man is in the hands of woman much oftener than twice. —Thrice?—It is surprising how nearly constantly. There is no correlation more striking than that of man and woman. They fit each other as do the right and the left hands.

The proposed singing I have done in *My Ego*—which I now offer—hoping for a continuation of criticism—favorable or unfavorable—the latter much preferred to none. It shows that attention has been given to things, which, wisely or unwisely, I have been trying, for decades, to get to as many minds as possible. Not the adverse critic's, of course. He has weighed them. But his strictures draw attention.

Were I not appreciative of the woman's guardianship, I would be coming shorter of the ideal man than I do. But have I no other guardians? There is the dog. And is a guardian-angel an impossibility? Then, my ego! May it not be a guardian? I am as aware of it as I am of the woman—as mother, wife, or nurse—or of the dog.

Is my ego myself? How can it be? It is myself who is aware of my ego. What is myself? I, myself, am as much a mystery to myself as is my ego, a flower, or any other phenomenon or noumenon—not one of which is

knowable, essentially. The evidence of myself, as existing as an entity, is cumulative, as truly as it is of any other thing, objective or subjective. An old professor once said to his class: "Young gentlemen, no one knows anything till he knows that he knows it!" He might have gone on, speaking of the possibility of one's knowing that one knows a thing, knowing that he knows, knowing that he knows that he knows, knowing that he knows that he knows that he knows, and so on, *ad infinitum.* No one can fail to see that this is true of one's knowing anything, such as the key of one's typewriter, or of any fact, such as that a straight line is the shortest distance between two points. And, of course, this is just as true of knowledge of self as of knowledge of any other thing or fact. Does this mean that in so knowing himself one is lost in Infinitude? No more than in his so knowing any other thing. Not so much. For one knows himself as conscious and self-conscious—which one can not know of any other thing or fact—which one can not more than conclude concerning any other person. Must it not be that one knows himself as "living and moving and having his being in" Infinitude? That one is continuing in that state? How long? Eternally? Must that not be the inference?

"Lord I believe, help Thou mine unbelief!" In so praying, I should do what I can to help myself, and get what other help I can elsewhere—not forgetting that belief is a different thing from faith—belief being a state of mind, while faith is a power of the mind—as any one of the senses is a power of the body. Belief comes from evidence. The producer of belief from evidence is reason. One knows a thing objective through its presentation to a sense—a thing subjective, through its presentation to a power, or faculty. The highest of one's faculties is faith.

But should reason be decried? The faith of the average person is not strong. The near-sighted man needs some one to lead, or direct, him to where the picture is within the range of his vision. So the one of weak faith needs reason to bring him to where he can see the Super-

nal. I felt complimented when one of my critics spoke of me as a poet of the reason. I love to poetize my philosophizing. It is to me the opening of least resistance to expression. And is it not through such an opening that one does his best work, and so the most good?

CHARLES JOSIAH ADAMS.

Rossville, Staten Island, N. Y.
May 30, 1919.

MY EGO

MY EGO

A transient, for a little space, in time,
Among my needings is a needing prime:
Some one to guard me; to the danger state,
Coming or present; to illuminate;
No wasting of the present to allow—
Recalling that the future has but now!

In infancy, the mother's anxious care
Was with me, waking, sleeping, ev'rywhere;
And, later, when I fainted by the way,
The white-capped nurse's watchfulness in play;
And when I reach my second-childhood, then
I'll be in woman's tender hands again—
The sexes by a cleavage set apart;
Man more the physical, the woman, heart;
Much oftener than the apparent thrice
Which here I sing, he needs her sacrifice,*
If such it be, which she's disposed to yield—
As shown in hospital, on battlefield,
No more than at the crib, in room of pain,
In endless household duties, moil and strain—
Her love surpassing all, save that which feels
The dog, self-lost, which follows at my heels,
Or, when my daily work, or follies, o'er,
Lies at the inner, or the outer, door
Of where I dwell, if palace, or if but
A rectory, or rain-admitting hut—
The human's friend, when first the species met,
And, spite of human frailties, friendly yet!—

* See Preface.

Friendly?—The master's one and only friend,
Who, loving once, is loving to the end—
No matter what the intervenings be:
Honors, disgraces, riches, poverty!—
And may an angel, spirit-bodied, keep
A vigil o'er me, while I wake or sleep?
One claims, his angel he has plainly seen,
And oft, in the penumbra that's between
The waking-sleeping, sleeping-waking, and,
A once—he wounded—reach a warding hand—
He swooning—that a bayoneting Hun
Might not complete what shrapnel had begun—
Claimings in which there is no show of feint,
Coming from that fine thing—the soldier saint!—
Not the conventional!—You doubt his word?—
Beware!—For wide the circle of his sword!—
Why were the balls allowed to hurt him so?—
He frankly answers that he does not know,
Though thinking, from the right he may have swerved,
And, so, the bitter punishment deserved.
That he's mistaken is not under ban;
But he's a saint, and, so, an honest man!
Why not his visions? He's to be apprized
As one of those who're not to be "despised,"
Because "their angels" are in special grace,
In that they "e'er behold my Father's face!"
Quoting the One Who, lonely, bowed His head—
To raise it—by an angel "comforted."
Were I, as soldier mentioned, brave and true,
As his, might not my angel serve me, too?
If more simplicity by me retained,
Would more of my connections have remained?
The cry from Macedonia was sent:
"Come o'er and help us!" The apostle—went!
Responding to a sense, which me has cost
Advance, the savage hunter ne'er is lost!
Is it but fancy that the infant's smile
Is from its angel being there the while?
Is it a fiction of beginnings dim,
"An hungered, angels ministered to Him?"

Would mine appear to me, and nothing loath,
Were I but, still, "a child of larger growth?"

Though, years ago, the mother passed before—
In nature's order—through the Common Door;
Though I may be sufficiently in health
For needing not the nurse's moral wealth;
My second childhood yet not here, that mine,
Once more, may be the woman's care divine;
Though I may not the ether cloudless keep,
Through which, to one, the angel-pinions sweep—
Yet there is proof that in the deeper Thought
Of my Creator I was not forgot—
That there was ordered, in His Mystic Plan,
That there be born with me a guardian—
A thing existing through the eöns past,
And through the endless coming ones to last!—
More than the hardest king the dead past saw,
Who said of government: *"L'etat, C'est Moi!"*—
More than Saint Paul, who promptly could reply,
In all comparisons: "And so am I!"
With emphasis repeated, o'er and o'er,
To, adding, with the proving: "I am more!"—
More than another of the teeming host,
Who consciousness, self-consciousness may boast,
Without distinguishing as great or small—
Does God?—within the Universal All;
Claimed He, of crown-of-thorns, of cross, of palm—
The Christ: "Ere Abraham appeared, I am!"—
From the Eternities, a while in time!—
Of all the lives yet known, the most sublime!

May I not, too, an ego have, as well,
With each of all of those who with me dwell,
Together jumbled, in this crazy world,
Where, somehow, we have been together hurled,
In Wisdom, for a purpose that's revealed,
I keeping, foolishly, my vision sealed?—
Does not a Personal Infinitude
Involve Infinitude of Multitude,

As hath the thumb the fingers in demand,
That I may have, me serving, either hand,
As each of them the other hath that they as two
May carry on the larger work to do,
And they my many members, that may be,
Upon my part but slight efficiency?—
Employing the infinitesimal
To Correlation hint—which governs all.

My ego?—More than germ, it is to hold,
From which I, as a person, sprang, unfold;
More than the Sketch of my Intender, Who
It gave to agents to be carried through,
As earthly architects their plans confide
To specialists, minutely qualified;
More than the something which together keeps
My parts, till waiting Death upon me leaps—
My ego?—which is separate from me!—
Else could I subject of its thinking be?—
As I as surely am, as anything
To me, to which I my attention bring,
Or yield, as pen, which, sputtering, the page
Befouls, or neighbor, in a mounting rage,
The chickens in his garden, or the bird,
Singing, this April morning, love-bestirred—
Or it of mine?—as it has been, since when
Began this song, is now, will be, till then
That I have finished it—as truly so,
As, passingly, the pen which would not go
To liking, or the neighbor so absurd,
Or the delightfully o'ermastered bird—
Better than stating in formality
My notion of my strange duality!

When I'm wool-gathering, my ego smiles,
Secretively, and, thus, my mind beguiles
From "planting in the moon potatoes," to
The nearer planting, which is mine to do,
And cultivating, that may be of worth
What I produce, conjointly with the earth—

To see that castle-building, not in Spain,
But on the hither-shore, is worth the pain—
That while imagination paints the end,
To reach it, I must to the now attend:
The structure, to the architect so quick,
Is by the mason builded, brick by brick;
The picture, which upon the painter broke,
A flash, comes on the canvas stroke by stroke;
The statue, leaping to the sculptor's thought,
Is by the chisel from the marble wrought;
The poet. whatsoe'er the muse may bring,
Must in the travail of the spirit sing!

The same as I my ego? If that be,
What more than, for a time, mortality
Is sleep—the natural, or the induced
Hypnotically, or howe'er produced,
That I may rest, or that I may not feel
The penetrating-cutting of the steel—
Mortality, which is eternal, when
I, in the body, waking not again?

I, waking, then my ego prods my will,
To cause my other powers to fulfil
Their functions—that my eyes may be about;
My ears atune to all of the Without;
That quick may be my feet to stand or run;
My hands alive to do the thing begun;
Attention prompt; my mem'ry strong to hold
That which I've lived, or thought, or have been told;
My reason, solving practicalities;
Imagination working on from these;
With fancy adding, now and then, a touch,
Restrained from marring by an overmuch
Of ornament the dignity, the pose,
Which with the worthy and the lasting goes,
In work with chisel, trowel, brush, or pen,
Or helping otherwise one's fellow men:
My ego, then, as driver of a team,
Upon the box, the lines in hands astream;

Or captain of the ship, on bridge in view,
Someway connected with the subject crew;
Or leader of a company, who knows
The men he holds, or into action throws.
When I am indolent, my ego shames
Me, frowningly, and pitilessly blames,
Till, in my irritation, I assume
My implements, and waiting task resume.

My ego, further, in my waking, may
Warn me of dangers which are on the way
To me, or which, as beasts-of-prey, await,
I forward stumbling, to whatever fate,
Along the path, from which the mists arise,
A little only, that my purblind eyes
May have a hint of where my foot falls next—
However brave my heart, my mind perplexed—
However I may have abiding trust,
That He Who made me must, at least, be just—
That somewhere, somehow, whatsoe're my plight
At present, there must be for me the light
Effulgent of an unimagined zone,
Though promised, where "I'll know as I am known!"
Prepared for months of travel in the lands
Where history the interest expands,
Intensifies, provision I had made
Of where-with-all, that might be largely paid,
Not only for the necessary things,
But for each one which passing pleasure brings,
Feeling I'd rather vegetate than be
On constant guard 'gainst prodigality;
In hoping that my sailing be not balked,
I read of what I'd see, the streets I walked,
Incessantly, or other measures took,
Which something of impatience from me shook.
Upon the street to me an order terse
Was given: "Put more money in your purse!"
I started, turned, regarded all about,
Then realized 'twas not from the without

The order came. But it had come! It stayed,
Insistant, in my memory. Obeyed?
That I be not, by e'en myself, apprized
As superstitious, thus I compromised:
"In secret pocket of my purse I'll pack
"Some gold-certificates—to bring them back—
"Unused!" . . . Well, I was deep in Germany
When came the War-of-wars—the World-Calamity!
My coupons, tickets, cheques—though certified—
In *krieges zustand,* with suspicion eyed!
Which made me wonder how I could endure
Environment so trying, and so sure
To danger bring, to all—the very best—
Including riot, mobbing and arrest—
The strain of each of which I came to bear—
Had, then, my yellow-beauties been elsewhere?—
Or how could I have reached the Netherlands?—
Or come to where the Stately Goddess stands,
Reaching ahigh her torch of Liberty,
Incitingly, to all who would be free?—
"The order but a fancy!" may be said—
"A troubled fancy of an addled head!"
However addled, I was only, then,
Impatient for the tarding moment, when
My ship should go—no trouble even there
For me—not subject to the *mal de mer!*—
"The order from an angel!" may be sneered,
As now-a-days supernal things are jeered.
But only to a saint is e'er the grant
Of blessedness of such a visitant!—
"A joke!" To such a theory a rub:
The fools were all assembled at the club!
And not a one of them had come to know
To where, or when, my purpose was to go!

If, thus, my ego thinks ahead for me,
May it not for my present caring be?—
At matins, once, the church was dark, indeed,
From stained-glass windows—which the light impede,

That sacred Mystery may reign, the while
The organ and the anthem souls beguile
From earthly things, that they be brought atune,
From reason's foolish questionings immune,
In faith and hope and charity to pray,
To hear what from the chancel is to say—
And from the state of weather then to fore:
Misty the air, the heavens clouded o'er.—
The time arriving for pre-sermon hymn,
I saw the light to be so very dim
That there might be a woeful happening:
The congregation seeing not to sing,
The choir alone would vocalize our thanks
And praise—temptation strong to vocal pranks!
And, so, I waved my hand.—A mellow glow—
A button touched—about, above, below.—
And, from the multitude, a lovely face
Was raised to me, in my official place,
Surprised, and with a thankfulness abeam—
As charming as a sainted artist's dream.
So may it be, in twilight of the mind,
Ego the light-effecting switch may find,
I waking, or in darkness dense and deep—
If waking other is—when I'm asleep.
It may be thus the Magdalene knew
The Christ, when Jesus to her village drew;
Or Newton gravitation—who can tell?—
When, near him, to the ground the apple fell;
Or Galileo, of the double fame,
Our universe in motion, "all the same,"
Though, when he saw what was to be endured,
The theory he—sensibly?—abjured.
A journalist asserts he need not count
The words or lines, to know that the amount
He writes for the edition to be run
Is written—simply knows when it is done.
I once was asked how, lecturing, I knew,
My time was up, and to conclusion drew,
My watch unseen. I said: "Subconsciousness!"—
An insufficient answer, I confess;

For it may be no more than avenue
Through which the ego comes its work to do.—
Then when I, sleeping, need a potion take,
Or fevered patient's thirst there is to slake,
Or it appearing that I'll oversleep,
There being need that I engagement keep,
Or when I'd make a train at—such o'clock,
May not my ego at a portal knock,
Or use some other means, the sluggish thing
I call myself to consciousness to bring,
No less than when, at present, it appears
That danger to my being is, or nears,
Or, in the rage of battle, comes the call—
Drowned else—the stern command, that in I fall,
Or that, again, an answer I attain
To problem o'er which long I've wracked my brain?
Across the decades, I am seeing come,
One morning, with the answer to the "sum,"
Which ev'ry mother's son of us had "stumped,"
And all the arithmatic knowledge "lumped,"
Which in the old red school-house was to find,
Among the scholars, with the Board combined,
The teacher having left it to the rest,
Because, he claimed, he thought it best,
The dumbest of us, with a tale to tell,
Which thus upon our eager hearing fell:
"When I waked up, at sunrise, in my bed,
"I had the answer!" And that's all he said.
Less to be wondered at than that which broke
Upon the sleeping president and woke
Him, so completely, that he rose and sought
The buzzer, which his secretary brought—
A something, which, a moment, caused surcease
Of differences, with a hope of peace;
Or that, in waking from a slumber sound,
The strangely-correlated poet found
A poem in his mind, which freely ran
As "Alph, the sacred river"—*Kubla Khan?*

And now: Occuring in the days my best,
When I was young, and when there was a West,
Not only geographical, but yet
Unfenced, with naught conventional to fret,
When, on the reaches, all was native-wild,
When man was brave, and simple as a child,
Dependable, and with a love supreme,
Or for the horse which bore him, or his team—
A love which came to e'en the visitant
To that vast, moundy, undulating slant,
From where the Rockies stand enwrapped in snow,
To where the Gulf's warm waters ebb and flow,
On which, in calm of summer, sunbeams beat,
With nothing mitigating to their heat,
Excepting where the water-courses are,
By uplands separated, sluggish, far,
Their banks protected by the breaks profound
And rocky, in the ever thirsty ground,
Or by morasses, which their waters make,
Which through surrounding quicksands passage take,
Which have protection given to the trees,
From sweeping fires, throughout the centuries.
The hottest day I'd felt, the stillest known,
I'd driven, from the peep of dawn, alone,
Barring that each of my spanned horses, fine,
Was giving me his thought, receiving mine,
Till, fully 'neath them, from the head to tail,
Their shadows fell upon the burning trail.
The time for nooning was arrived, I saw,
And that, not far before us, was a draw,
Descent to which I knew precipitate,
That, by its stream, was welcome shade await,
For which the walls, 'tween which it ran, the thanks.
Together with the marshes of its banks.
In language of the period—"out there"—
When I the "ribbons" drew, I was aware
That in my drawers' "throttles" there were "lumps;"
Flanks heaving, they were threatened by the "thumps."
Naught was to do but for the afternoon
To camp, and travel by the stars and moon—

The former ever near, with upward pull
To thought, the latter, now, approaching full.
How calm they were, and how on me she glowed,
The night arrived, and we sometime aroad,
Upon a wide plateau, which reached to where
The Flint Hills Cairn of boulders rose in air!
The span ajog, my throat from band released,
How pleasant was a soft breeze from the east,
An hour or so!—Until a rumble shook
The very earth!—Which my atttention took!—
Over my shoulder.—From the west it came.—
And what I saw sent shudders through my frame!—
Upon an upper-current heaved a stack
Of clouds—as from Infernal Furnace, black—
The fires replenished, and the draughts all free—
That it might be as hot as heat may be!
I caught the horses' eyes—their heads turned, too—
Their bodies, also, shaking, through and through!
My impulse was: To anywhere, away!
And theirs the same, most surely, one would say;
For haunches sinking, with a frightened cough,
They pulled themselves together, and were off,
Along the trail, the sparks from off the flint,
Their shoes were striking, in a stream, aglint!
This suited me, until, receiving thought,
That they'd expend themselves, my will was brought
To slowing them, that they might, soberly,
Attend to saving them, in saving me.
When each had understood my voice, the rein,
They were at one, in serving me again.
The walk—the Western horse, he knew it not;
The gait to which I brought them was the trot.
No need that they should from me have behest,
That, in their trotting, they should do their best—
The while I pondered how to act, that we
Should by the hurricane least injured be.
The thing to do, unless we shelter make,
Was that the wheels I from the wagon take,
The horses fasten by the lariat,
By wagon-body crouch—let go at that!

"Beyond the cairn, there is a little dell,
"In which some poorly-shantied squatters dwell,"
Came, as a whisper, to my inner ear,
"And, there protected, you'll have less to fear!"
I chirped. The horses struck a faster pace—
Half breaking—opening a dizzy race—
Seeming—the splendid beasts!—to comprehend
That not too soon their forces were to spend.
I spoke. They entered on a swinging lope,
Their ears apointed and their tails aslope.
I shouted. And they to a gallop broke,
Their feet upon the flashing flint astroke.
I snapped the whip. Their bellies to the ground,
Their nostrils wide, they answered to the sound,
With such a vigor, that they fairly flew
The lights and shadows on the hard trail through—
The clouds so near that heralds in advance
Would cause to blink the moon—disturb her glance—
With, now and then, a fragment of such mass
Its shadow would for hoped-for valley pass,
Till flicking fancy would corrected be
By knowledge that the cairn was first to see.
When it appeared, I could some comfort take,
The storm appearing just about to break—
The comfort only this: Within its lee,
We would, not much, but somewhat, sheltered be.
We soon were there, I down, a trace unhooked,
When someone, who no hesitation brooked,
Commanded a rehooking—a restart—
Along the trail, to an awaiting part!
Adown an inclination steep—areel—
Sometimes, apparently, upon one wheel—
The horses tethered—I could do no more;
And I was knocking at a shanty door.
A long man soon appearing—vestment scant—
Holding a smoky zero-lamp aslant—
Saying: "Our quarters are so very small,
"We have no room for any more at all!"—
I answering: "Or there will be a fight"—
Laughing—"or I'll be sheltered here tonight!"—

"All right!"—with hearty guffaw—then he said,
And I was to a narrow lean-to led,
In which a table, with some chairs, I spied;
A cooking-stove excepted, naught beside.
Upon my arm a heavy robe I bore,
Which, wearied to the core, upon the floor
I threw, and fell upon. Too tired to think
My inclination was to simply sink
To resting—which I should have done straightway
Had it not been, an elemental play
Of unchained forces kept me waking, till
A someone acted on my wav'ring will,
As does the mother on the child's, to whom
A spectre stalks about a darkened room.
Then sank my brow within my hollowed arm,
And sensing me protected from all harm,
I sank, at once, to slumber, as complete
As slumber may be—deep, refreshing sleep—
Though flash and crash were ruffling the without,
And thunderbolts were hissing all about.
It seems, almost, I might be sleeping yet
But for my host. For breakfast was to get.
I soon was out. And stood, with open mouth,
Seeing the storm we'd weathered passing south.
The solid clouds were, as a curtain, drawn,
To hide the splendor of the early dawn,
Which bathed the here, from those behind their blue
So inky, while across them zigzagged, through
Them darted, and adown them came, arush,
As wide as trees, as if a world to crush,
The lightnings—all appearing, as it may,
If God be angry, on the Judgment Day!
Amazed, my muscles tense, my nerves astrain,
With not-to-utter-tumult of the brain,
How long I'd not have noted nearer by,
But for my host's approaching, no reply.
"The cairn!" the cry, as from the shanty ran
The good-of-nature and phlegmatic man.
There was enough of light to see its top,
When I had brought my horses to a stop

Within the valley. Now I looked. And where
It stood—was but a blank horizon there!
We went to see. A thunderbolt had struck
Its apex. And about there was but ruck!

When well I'd passed my noon of living, went
The mother, with the Angel God had sent,
Called Death—went peacefully, and with a smile,
Conscious of the departed there the while—
A smile to me, of deep solicitude,
That I should suffer nothing hurtful, rude—
I being still to her but ten years old—
My age when raging waves of discord rolled
Athwart our land, and dear homes brought to earth,
In an united Nation's gracious birth,
And we were separated, save, at times,
When I, from other customs, other climes,
Would visit her—when she, throughout the day,
Insistent was that I should with her stay—
When she would come, at night, and tuck me in,
And pat my cheek, and chuck me 'neath the chin,
And kiss me, asking, with affection deep,
If I had said my: "Lay me down to sleep!"—
When I to health again was on the way,
I met the one who cared me when I lay
In hospital; her look was not the same
As when to take my temperature she came:
Not being to her patient as before,
Her nursely interest in me was o'er!—
And when the years allowed my dog gone by,
He'd crawled away, to lying down to die;
When seemed my angel leaving me to weep,
I failing open way for her to keep:
My ego turned away, morosely sad;
As, stubbornly, my wilful way I'd had;
But could not go, for it is bound with me,
For all of time and for eternity.

The normal mother-care, through infancy,
Ceases on coming of maturity;

The nurse's when my ailment is no more,
And I'm at duties, pleasures, as before;
And while my dog's so truly lost in me,
That he is mine, whatever I may be;
And while my nature may be such, that, here,
To me my angel never may be near;
My ego and myself together run,
Or willingly or not—as two in one:
So, while my mother's mem'ry I revere,
And while my nurse to me is very dear,
And while the one who wrongs my dog will meet
The like from me, or have more rapid feet,
And while my angel's finest and the best,
My trust in ego, under God, shall rest,
Responding to the Ego—Who to me
Is calling, from the heights of Galilee!—
In hope that, if I come to be His Guest,
I'll meet the ones I love—among the best,
My dog; for—howsoever low my place,
If granted only by a Special Grace,
And near the portal of the Banquet Hall,
Where I'll be scarcely seen, if seen at all,
Excepting by the Host and those who cared
For me the while I through the world-life fared—
He'll stand a moment, as if asking help
To comprehend, then—with a sudden yelp,
Rushing the intervenings over, by,
As glad as if my placing were more high—
Precipitate himself on me—the while
The mother greets with disappointed smile,
The nurse with one of kindly reprimand,
The angel sadly looking a demand,
Why I, apparently, had fixed my will,
That she her services should not fulfill,
While to my ego scarlet blushes come—
In thinking of his all-but-failure, dumb!—
Occurring when this transiency is o'er—
After I've sailed for the Eternal Shore:
Of which I've always had a memory,
In faint and flickering uncertainty—

After has burst that Shore upon my sight,
Its bloom and verdure in supernal light,
Its mighty reaches glowing, burnished-gold,
With seams of silver, jewels manifold,
Its prairies wide, its looming-mountains high,
All forest-clothed, to pierce a sapphire-sky,
While in the middle-distance, dim and far,
The walls and turrets of The City are,
In which I know to be a Judgment Hall—
After I, there, have heard the Sentence fall,
On which depends if to the Blessed Feast
I be admitted, e'en to place the least:
A sentence which could not but righteous be,
Considering, in full, heredity,
Environment, and whether they have shown
Them faithful, who as guardians are known,
Forgetting not, that in the transient state,
Chiefly in my own hands was placed my fate—
Contempt attaching if I weakly claim
For my defects ancestors are to blame,
Environment, or any one with share
In giving what I have so needed, care,
Or e'en advantage of th' Atonement take,
Till ev'ry payment for myself I make,
That's possible, for any wrong I've done,
Or, worse, aside, allowed its course to run,
In wandering the crooked paths I've trod,
Impulsed by selfishness, away from God.

With reverence, I think the endless line
Through which has come the character that's mine;
I'm thankful for the chances to me lent,
By oft unutilized environment;
I beg the pardon of my guardians
For dullness, stubbornness and elans;
For opening the way to what may be
For me, I bow to Him of Galilee;
Praying I may be strong enough to stand
What's meted to me by the Father's Hand—
Remembering there is a dignity—
I being I—the property of me!—

To be increased by humble confidence
In God, and in His agents' competence,
In His Intent, as correlations tell,
As eöns lapse, with me it shall be well,
In His subjecting His Infinitude,
For my salvation, to the garden, rood—
The agents sent, that they, by night and day,
May watch me, sleeping, stumbling on the way,
Through dimness winding, to the hither shore,
To embarkation for the Evermore,
Where parting from the temporal must be,
With me my ego only booked for sea.

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It has been said of Doctor Adams: "He thinks in pictures." That is a good way to put it. He expresses himself in pictures.

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Each of his poems is a picture, or a succession of pictures. Take as an example the last poem of this collection:

"To Miss .....
Afterwards
Mrs. ....."

Just after the sun had retired him to rest,
To his gorgeously curtained couch in the west,
I saw, from some mysterious where,
A star appear in the upper air;
And the night-winds sighed, as, in lowered tone,
They murmered sadly: "Alone—alone!"
But they joyously laughed—clapped their hands in my face—
As another star came—took by him her place;
And, together, they're reigning, and greater, by far,
In union, than either could be as a star!"

Could the question be popped more distinctly? Every one of Doctor Adams' pictures conveys something, principal or subordinate. In the latter case, it fits in, playing its part in the making of the larger picture—as in **Reprieve, The Matterhorn Head, To a Midwinter Fly, The Gray Charger,** the . . . But get the collection and read it! For the sake of the pictures. Not only. For Doctor Adams never gets far away from the idea for which he has sacrificed so much in the course of the decades; the idea which he has embodied in the word (which is his) **Biophilism,** the Love of Life, the largest expression of which he has given in his prose: **Where Is My Dog; or, Is Man Alone Immortal?**

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